1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

142 Among the llaneros the Yaruros have the reputation of being darker in color than any of the other tribes. This may be due to their daily exposure to the sun, for I have noticed that forest peoples tend to be lighter in color than those living in the open country. This observation was also made by the early Spanish missionaries. Gilii wrote:

> The color of the peoples of the Orinoco commonly is dark, but somewhat reddish. It is true that some tribes, for example the Otomachi' and the Guami', incline toward black. But they are of such a color, nevertheless, that there is no one among them who can be said to be similar to the Negroes, whose color they abhor. Generally the tribes close to the Orinoco like the Zaruvi (Jaruvos), and the Quaquari' are brown; even more whitish are the inhabitants of the interior, and of the forests. Whitish are the Maipuri, some Tamanachi, and above all the Macchiritari, and the Oji.[1]

The most striking thing in the appearance of the Yaruros is the skin condition referred to by the Racionales as "pintado," painted. When a Yaruro is first afflicted, some patch of his skin will become dry and almost sooty black in color. This will gradually lose all pigment and become as light as the skin of a white man. Practically every individual of the band I met at El Buron showed this patchy skin. The appearance is analogous to that of being profusely covered with [146] freckles. This condition does not affect the health of the individual in any way. By the Racionales it is attributed to the habit of eating crocodile meat and crocodile eggs. The Yaruros give no explanation for it.

●304 They practice no mutilations except that the women drill small holes [752] through the lower lip through which they thrust bone pins. One woman wore 13 such pins. She often used them to prick blisters raised by insect bites.

516 The Yaruros seemed to be ambidextrous. In a group of approximately 150, I counted 6 cases of definite left-handedness, but generally, the left hand is used with a certain amount of dexterity. In addition to using the hands, the toes are used to pick up objects; for instance, if the man wishes to pick up his bow from the ground he will not stoop, but will pick it up with his toes and raise it to the level of his hands.

The posture of the Yaruros is an excellent adaptation to the soft sands on which they are forced to walk whenever they are out of their canoes. Their shoulders are thrown far back with the chest

[1] Gilii, vol. 2, book 1, p. 34: Il colore degli Orinochesi, comunamente e fosco, ma inclinante alquanto all' rossicio. Vero e, che alcune nazioni, a cagion di esempio, gli Ottomachi, ed i Guani, tirano piutoste al nero. Ma sono di color tale nondimeno, che niuno tra essi vi e, che possa dirsi simile a Negri, il cual colore abcorriscono moltissimo. Generalmente le nazioni vicine all 'Orinoco, siccome le suddette, i Zaurui, e i Quaquari, sono piu brune; piu bianchi gli abitanti delle macchie interne, e de'monti. Bianchicci sono dunque i Mapoi, i Maipuri, alcuni Tamanachi, e sopra tutti i Macchiritari, e gli Oji.

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

609 123

women sang to me and for me, I was not able to learn anything about their conceptions of the universe nor any other matter.

796 ●304 302

On one occasion Landaeta, the shaman, invited Juan Bario's band to participate in a performance. The women prepared for it by painting the face with stamped designs—stamps smeared with oily stuff, stamped on the face, then the entire face, from eyebrows down, was covered with a thick coat of red ocher. It stuck where the grease was. The hair was worn in one braid down the back. They wore their best dresses.

521 123

In anticipation of a long night, I lay down on the sands to rest, if possible. However, the skies interested the Yaruros. Landaeta and his people lay beside me to talk about the heavens. From that we passed to a discussion of Hatchawa, who, according to Landaeta, had said that I was well known to him and a good friend. In order to test the shaman I told him that I was anxious about my family whom I had left so long ago, and I asked him to find out about my wife, son, and general family from Hatchawa, which he promised to do. The conversation went back to the stars, and as the big dipper began to rise over the northern horizon Landaeta disappeared in the darkness. Soft conversation continued, and then came Juan Bario and his family to join us.

796 [292]

A few words of warm friendship with Juan Bario and we went to joint Landaeta, who was sitting ready to begin. Landaeta had withdrawn to the west of the camp, and put on his shamanistic breechclout and head-cloth, which consisted of a sort of headkerchief. His son Brigido sat behind him; to the right of Landaeta sat Brigida, his wife, and next to her, her sister. Juan Bario and I sat back a little.

Unlike our own religious ceremonies, there was no attempt at artificial seriousness. The children played about noisily, without reproof, under the very nose of the shaman, some of the men jested and laughed, others conversed more quietly, etc. In other words, the imminent communion with the gods was an event of festive proportions, and no restraints were placed on the normal and natural behavior.

796 791

Landaeta began to sing and he was accompanied by a few of the attendants. In the meanwhile small fires had appeared here and there, and at these were lighted the long green leaf-covered cigars. None smoked an entire cigar, following the general custom of sharing with the other fellow. The songs at first were accompanied with faint rattling of the macaua, but this became stronger and stronger as the shaman approached the Land of Kuma. Finally at midnight—almost on the stroke—the shaman announced in his song that he had reached the desired land. The singing became more intense, faster, and everyone seemed to take more interest.

1: Petrullo E-8 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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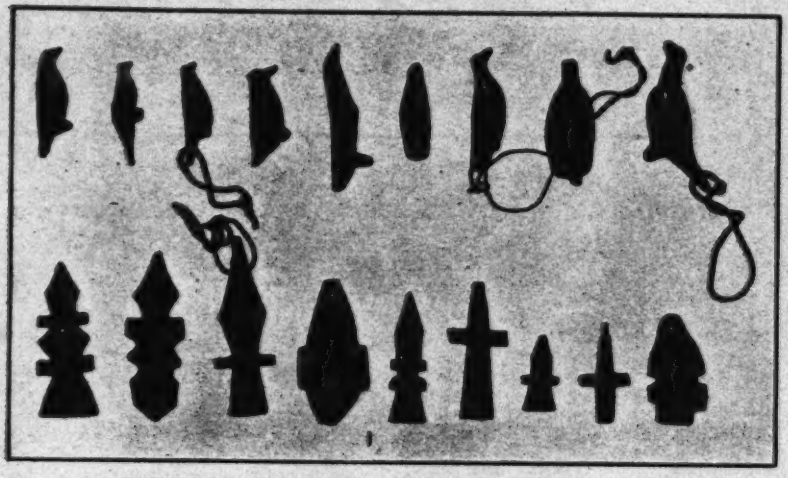
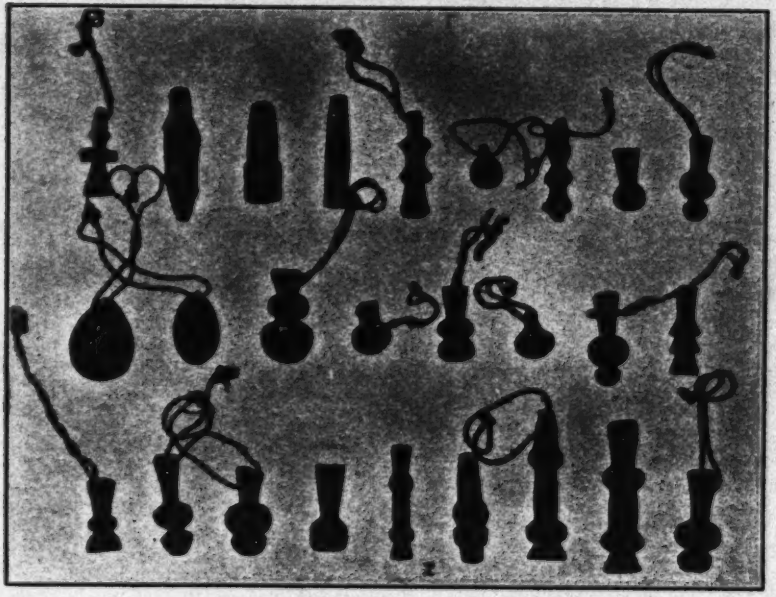


1. Anabache carvings. Top row: birds, mostly ducks. Lower row: geometric forms.



2. Anabache carvings. The two specimens of the middle row at the extreme left are palm-nut shells. For the most part these carvings represent seeds.

(End Plate 11)

1: Petrullo E-3 (1933-34) 1939 SS19 Yaruro SS19

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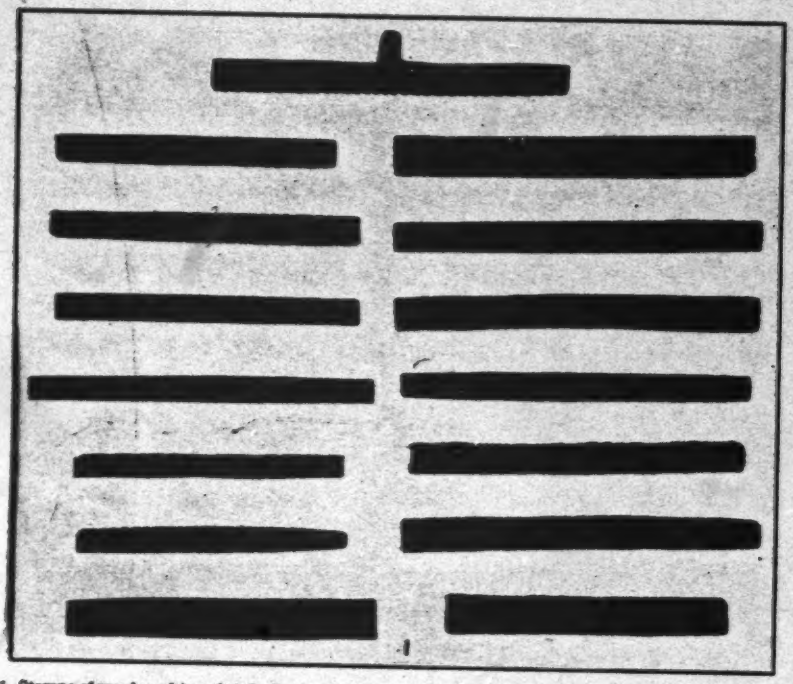

1. Stamps of wood used to paint the body. These stamps are made by the men, but used by the women. The designs are stamped on the face.

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304
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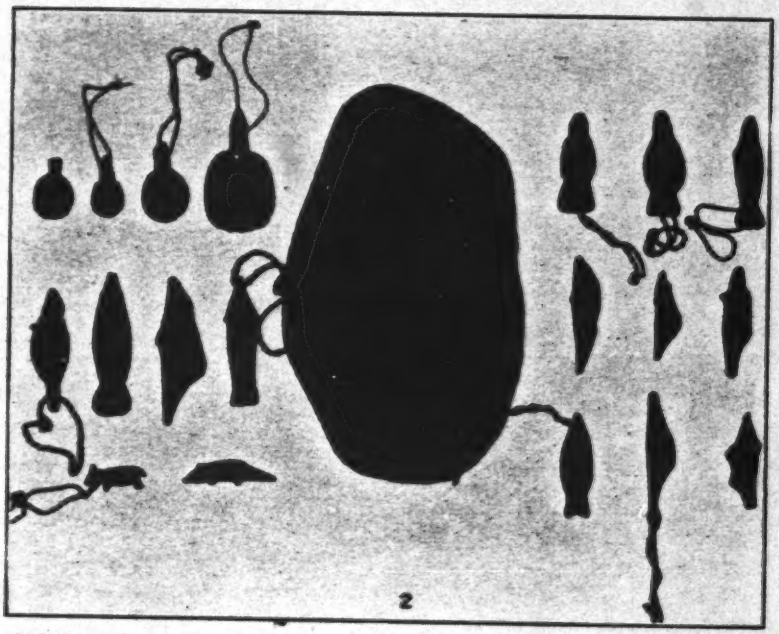

2. Asabache carvings. Center: piece of asabache as found in the rivers. Top row left: carvings of turtles. Top row right: carvings of birds. Middle row left and right: carvings of fishes. Lower row: carvings of (1) jaguar, (2) armadillo. Lower right: carvings of fishes.

[End Plate 12]